

Iowa public schools have an excellent reputation nationwide, and Iowa students' test scores are among the highest in the Nation.

I would like to take just a few minutes, today, to salute the dedicated teachers, administrators, and school board members in the Valley Community School District, and to report on their participation in a unique Federal partnership to repair and modernize school facilities.

This fall marks the 10th year of the Iowa Demonstration Construction Grant Program. That is its formal name, but it is better known among educators in Iowa as the program of Harkin grants for Iowa public schools. Since 1998, I have been fortunate to secure a total of \$121 million for the State government in Iowa, which selects worthy school districts to receive these grants for a range of renovation and repair efforts—everything from updating fire-safety systems to building new schools or renovating existing facilities. In many cases, this Federal funding is used to leverage public and/or private local funding, so it often has a tremendous multiplier effect in a local school district.

The Valley Community School District received a 2002 Harkin grant totaling \$812,000 which it used to help build an addition and make renovations to provide science labs and a computer lab. This school is a modern, state-of-the-art facility that befits the educational ambitions and excellence of this school district. Indeed, it is the kind of school facility that every child in America deserves. The district also received two fire safety grants totaling \$75,000 to make safety improvements throughout the district.

Excellent schools do not just pop up like mushrooms after a rain. They are the product of vision, leadership, persistence, and a tremendous amount of collaboration among local officials and concerned citizens. I salute the entire staff, administration, and governance in the Valley Community School District. In particular, I'd like to recognize the leadership of the board of education—president Rick Klann, Dawn Daughton, Dr. DeWayne Frazier, Mark Howard, Mick Olson and former board members Gregg Kleppe, Allen Knox, Celeste Strong, and Lois Dummermuth. I would also like to recognize superintendent Cathleen Molumby, and the many volunteers and members of the School Improvement Advisory Committee.

As we mark the 10th anniversary of the Harkin school grant program in Iowa, I am obliged to point out that many thousands of school buildings and facilities across the United States are in dire need of renovation or replacement. In my State of Iowa alone, according to a recent study, some 79 percent of public schools need to be upgraded or repaired. The harsh reality is that the average age of school buildings in the United States is nearly 50 years.

Too often, our children visit ultra-modern shopping malls and gleaming sports arenas on weekends, but during the week go to school in rundown or antiquated facilities. This sends exactly the wrong message to our young people about our priorities. We have got to do better.

That is why I am deeply grateful to the professionals and parents in the Valley Community School District. There is no question that a quality public education for every child is a top priority in that community. I salute them, and wish them a very successful new school year.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mrs. Neiman, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The nominations received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 10:57 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 6169. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 15455 Manchester Road in Ballwin, Missouri, as the "Specialist Peter J. Navarro Post Office Building".

H.R. 6513. An act to amend the Federal securities laws to enhance the effectiveness of the Securities and Exchange Commission's enforcement, corporation finance, trading and markets, investment management, and examination programs, and for other purposes.

H.R. 6608. An act to provide for the replacement of lost income for employees of the House of Representatives who are members of a Reserve component of the Armed Forces who are on active duty for a period of more than 30 days, and for other purposes.

H.R. 6832. An act to authorize major medical facility projects and major medical facility leases for the Department of Veterans Affairs for fiscal year 2009, to extend certain authorities of the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

The President pro tempore (Mr. BYRD) announced that on September 11, 2008, he had signed the following enrolled bill, previously signed by the Speaker of the House:

H.R. 6532. An act to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to restore the Highway Trust Fund balance.

At 11:55 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by

Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 6475. An act to establish the Daniel Webster Congressional Clerkship Program.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bills were read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 6169. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 15455 Manchester Road in Ballwin, Missouri, as the "Specialist Peter J. Navarro Post Office Building"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 6475. An act to establish the Daniel Webster Congressional Clerkship Program; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

H.R. 6513. An act to amend the Federal securities laws to enhance the effectiveness of the Securities and Exchange Commission's enforcement, corporation finance, trading and markets, investment management, and examination programs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

H.R. 6832. An act to authorize major medical facility projects and major medical facility leases for the Department of Veterans Affairs for fiscal year 2009, to extend certain authorities of the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-7564. A communication from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Maryland; NOx, and SO2 Emissions Limitations for Fifteen Coal-Fired Electric Generating Units" (FRL No. 8709-7) received on August 29, 2008; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-7565. A communication from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; State of Utah; Revised Transportation Conformity Consultation Process, and Approval of Related Revisions" (FRL No. 8700-7) received on August 29, 2008; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-7566. A communication from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Bacillus subtilis GB03; Exemption from the Requirement of a Tolerance" (FRL No. 8378-5) received on August 29, 2008; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-7567. A communication from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Dichlobenil; Pesticide Tolerances" (FRL No. 8377-7) received on August 29, 2008; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-7568. A communication from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fenbuconazole; Pesticide Tolerances" (FRL No. 8376-4) received on August 29, 2008; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-7569. A communication from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Revisions to the California State Implementation Plan, Antelope Valley Air Quality Management District" (FRL No. 8701-4) received on August 29, 2008; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-7570. A communication from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Acetic acid ethenyl ester, polymer with sodium 2-methyl-2-[(1-oxo-2-propen-1-yl)amino]-1-propanesulfonate (1:1), hydrolyzed; Tolerance Exemption" (FRL No. 8380-1) received on September 9, 2008; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-7571. A communication from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans and Operating Permits Program; State of Missouri" (FRL No. 8713-8) received on September 9, 2008; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-7572. A communication from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans Alabama: Volatile Organic Compounds and Open Burning" (FRL No. 8714-7) received on September 9, 2008; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-7573. A communication from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; Florida; Removal of Gasoline Vapor Recovery from Southeast Florida Areas" (FRL No. 8714-8) received on September 9, 2008; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-7574. A communication from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Louisiana; Approval of Section 110(a)(1) Maintenance Plan for the 1997 8-Hour Ozone Standard for the New Orleans Ozone Maintenance Area" (FRL No. 8713-6) received on September 9, 2008; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-7575. A communication from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Maryland; Amendments to the Control of Incinerators" (FRL No. 8714-5) received on September 9, 2008; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-7576. A communication from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Michigan; PSD Regulations" (FRL No. 8714-1) received on September 9, 2008; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-7577. A communication from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting,

pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Bacillus thuringiensis Cry2Ae in Cotton; Temporary Exemption from the Requirement of a Tolerance" (FRL No. 8380-1) received on September 9, 2008; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-7578. A communication from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Benfluralin, Carbaryl, Diazinon, Dicrotophos, Fluometuron, Formetanate Hydrochloride, Glyphosate, Metolachlor, Napropamide, Norflurazon, Pyrazon, and Tau-Fluvalinate; Tolerance Actions" (FRL No. 8379-3) received on September 9, 2008; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-7579. A communication from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "NPDES Voluntary Permit Fee Incentive for Clean Water Act Section 106 Grants; Allotment Formula" (FRL No. 8712-7) received on September 9, 2008; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-7580. A communication from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Spiromesifen; Pesticide Tolerances" (FRL No. 8379-8) received on September 9, 2008; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-7581. A communication from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Control of Emissions from Nonroad Spark-Ignition Engines and Equipment" (FRL No. 8712-8) received on September 9, 2008; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. BIDEN, from the Committee on Foreign Relations, without amendment:

S. 3097. A bill to amend the Vietnam Education Foundation Act of 2000 (Rept. No. 110-458).

By Mr. BIDEN, from the Committee on Foreign Relations, with amendments:

H.R. 2553. A bill to amend the State Department Basic Authorities Act of 1956 to provide for the establishment and maintenance of existing libraries and resource centers at United States diplomatic and consular missions to provide information about American culture, society, and history, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 110-459).

By Mr. LEAHY, from the Committee on the Judiciary, without amendment:

S. 2052. A bill to allow for certiorari review of certain cases denied relief or review by the United States Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces.

S. 3166. A bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to impose criminal penalties on individuals who assist aliens who have engaged in genocide, torture, or extrajudicial killings to enter the United States.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. ENSIGN:

S. 3483. A bill to improve consumer access to passenger vehicle loss data held by insurers; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. SPECTER (for himself, Mr. HARKIN, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. ROCKEFELLER, Mr. WYDEN, and Mr. SMITH):

S. 3484. A bill to provide for a delay in the phase out of the hospice budget neutrality adjustment factor under title XVIII of the Social Security Act; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. HARKIN (for himself and Mr. LUGAR):

S. 3485. A bill to require manufacturers to increase the percentage of automobiles manufactured for sale within the United States that are capable of operating on higher-level blends of renewable fuels, such as ethanol and biodiesel, in combination with gasoline or diesel fuel; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. FEINGOLD:

S. 3486. A bill to establish the Commission on Measures of Household Economic Security to conduct a study and submit a report containing recommendations to establish and report economic statistics that reflect the economic status and well-being of American households; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. REID (for Mr. KENNEDY (for himself, Mr. HATCH, Mr. OBAMA, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. DODD, Mr. COCHRAN, and Mrs. CLINTON)):

S. 3487. A bill to amend the National and Community Service Act of 1990 to expand and improve opportunities for service, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. NELSON of Nebraska (for himself and Mr. INHOFE):

S. Res. 657. A resolution designating September 13, 2008, as "National Celiac Disease Awareness Day"; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. NELSON of Nebraska:

S. Res. 658. A resolution expressing the sense of the Senate that the former chief executive officers of Fannie Mae should not receive lavish severance packages at taxpayer expense; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 860

At the request of Mr. SMITH, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. BIDEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 860, a bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to permit States the option to provide Medicaid coverage for low-income individuals infected with HIV.

S. 935

At the request of Mr. SPECTER, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 935, a bill to repeal the requirement for reduction of survivor annuities under the Survivor Benefit Plan by veterans' dependency and indemnity compensation, and for other purposes.

S. 1010

At the request of Mr. SMITH, the name of the Senator from Michigan